

The FoReM BBS system consists of 6 programs and a number of data and text files. Any file that has a 3 character extension in its file name is either a data file (DAT) or a text file (TXT). It is necessary to move these files from your program disk to your working data disk before you attempt to run the bbs. After you initialize the system, These files may be edited as you please, but the file STATUS.TXT, must retain the same format or else the system will generate an error when a user attempts to use the profile function.

There are 6 programs on your program disk, plus DOS, Dup and AUTORUN.SYS.

You cannot substitute your own DOS/AUTORUN system for the following reasons:

The autorun file contains the machine language clock for the bbs. If you replace it, the system time will never change. This program is too large to run under ATARI DOS 2.0S or 2.0D (let alone OS/A+). It must be run under Wordmark's MYDOS 3.05, 3.07 or 3.08. It will not run using MYDOS 3.14, however it will run on the ATR 8000 using the 850. As of this date, there are still bugs in the ATR's 850 emulator that keeps this program from functioning properly.

The program START is a menu that allows you to select a FoReM system program.

The option for the disk utilities does not send you to DOS. It selects the FoReM download file utility.

The program INITBBS, is the program used to initialize and maintain your system message files. You can add, delete, expand, or rename and message base. In this system, the words 'message base', 'conference' and 'board' are used interchangeably. INITBBS is the first program you should run to set

up
your system. Select option 'initialize bbs'. the program will prompt
you
for how many message bases to set up, their names and how many
sectors you
wish to allocate for them. This system will allow up to 26 message
bases;
assuming you have the disk space. Each message base can only hold
approx 46
messages. It has been my experience that each one of these should be
about 150
single density sectors. If you are running double density, be aware
that
this program accepts numbers as 128 byte sectors. So still request
150
sectors. Your DOS directory will show the proper 75 double density
sectors.
The message files generated by this program are similar in design to
those
used in the AMIS system, but they are not compatible. The program
will
prompt you if it should initialize the password data file. The first
time
you init the system, you must answer yes. It will ask you how many
sectors
to allocate. Each password uses 50 bytes of disk space and each
sector
has 125 data bytes available. This is simply to pre-allocate disk
space,
so that as the system acquires uploaded files, it does not crash when
attempting to save a new password. The system will automatically
increase
the size of the password file, if it tries to save a new password
past
the current end of file.

The program MESSFIX, is a utility program used when an error occurs
in your
data disk. Like AMIS, this system using indexed sequential message
files,
which are accessed by the ATARI random access note/point routines.
If your
disk develops a problem such as a bad sector and you simply copy your

message files to a new disk, you will find that they no longer function due to and error 164. This can be fixed by running MESSFIX which will correct the point values. The function in this program to rebuild the system configuration file does not work properly. If you have a problem with your data disk, the way to fix it is as follows:

- 1) copy all good files over to a new disk. If your CONFIG.DAT file is bad, you have no choice but to reinitialize the entire system using INITBBS.
- 2) If there was a problem in any of the message files, (either a DA[x] or an IS[x] file), then reinitialize that particular file using the reinitaialize one conference option of INITBBS.
- 3) run MESSFIX to correct the point values.
- 4) go get a mellonball shooter. the official drink of Rickey Moose.

The program VALIDATE is used to maintain the user password file. With this program, you can change a user's name, password, access level or phone number. You can also do a general edit of the file requesting that passwords not used in any given length of time be flagged. The program can search for a name or password and either display or automatically delete it. It can also automatically delete any password not used in any given period of time more tha 30 days. The system has 26 levels of access. You must give yourself level 25. (0-25) Level 25 allows you remote sysop access, the abilty to print messages, down/upload system files, read/delete any message...etc.

The program DISKUTIL is a utility program to manipulate the download files. Besides the ability to delete a dl file, this program manipulates the qualifiers on the dl filename. These parameters are translation mode, program language, program application and access level required to download the program.

FOREM26M.2 is the main bbs program. Upon running, you enter the time and the date. At this point the program will set up a display list

giving you a 20 line monitor (all output is echoed to the screen) and a 4 line text window. This window will tell you a number of things about the current caller. Included are his name and access level, the time he logged on, the functions he has used (reset at mod 20=0), his caller number, the number of callers since bootup, the current disk file in use, the current 850 translation mode, the number of messages in the system, and the number of messages entered since bootup. The program will then display a series of numbers. This program is so large that it uses the ATARI's forced read mode to delete the initialization code to make room for the text buffer. The program will then display the current time in the center of the screen. At this time, you have three options. Pressing the OPTION key will toggle the sysop paging system on and off. A graphic representation of the system being on or off is shown in the lower right hand corner of the text window. Pressing the START key will end the program and save the current system configuration to disk. If you do not end the program in this way, the only detrimental effect will be that the caller number may not be correct. There will be no harm done to any random access file. Pressing the SELECT key will allow you local access to the system. The system will display the welcome message and return with a prompt for password. The first time you log on to the system you must apply for a password, just like any first time user. After you apply for a password, you must give yourself password level 25. You can do this in one of 2 ways. In either case, you must save your password to disk by logging off and requesting that your password be saved. In the first method, before you log off, while at the main select prompt, hit the BREAK key. Then type GOTO 90 and RETURN. The system will prompt 'NEW LEVEL'. Type 25 followed by a

RETURN. Then Type P and RETURN to verify that it was accepted.
The other method is to logoff, and then end the BBS and run validate.
Answer yes to the validate request to check only new users. Then
change your
access level to 25.

Having level 25 does a number of things for you.

You can:

Read all locked messages

Delete any message

Route a message to the system printer

Download any file including system files

To download a system file, if you have level 25, when the system
asks for a filespec, give it the entire filespec except the device
name,

but including an entire 3 character extender (you may have to pad
it

with blanks)

To upload a system file with extender,

access the \$ remote sysop function.

The \$ function will prompt you for a XIO command number and
filespec. You can use XIO 32,33,35 and 36 to respectively rename,
delete,

lock or unlock a file. you must delete a file before uploading
a new version.

The system operator also has priority when a caller is online. All
system

output that the caller sees is also echoed to the screen. When the
system

is waiting for input from the caller, the sysop can locally type over
the

callers input. In this way, you can enter commands for him.

In addition, when the system is waiting for input, the computer's
console

keys have the following functions:

OPTION stops the program at line 100. This is done because the break
key

does not work when the system is in the concurrent I/O modem. The
program

can be continued by typing CONT.

SELECT will display 'system coming down' and log the user off.

START will break the system into 'CHAT' mode.

Pressing both OPTION and SELECT will allow you to change the user's
access

level while he is online. valid levels are 0-25. Only the sysop should be given level 25. Level 0 will not allow the user to upload or to enter messages. This is done to deter system crashers. If you should happen to hit option just slightly before select and you get stopped at line 100, type 'GOTO 90' to get to the new level prompt. the user will be automatically logged off if there is no input in approx 3 minutes. When the sysop is online locally, if he pages himself using option Y, the system will go into terminal mode. The system can then be used as a primitive terminal emulator to call other computers and bbs's. The translation mode will be whatever mode the bbs was in, so to switch it, you use main menu option A. To switch to ASCII mode, instead of hitting return at the prompt, hit any other key.

Random notes:

To exit from CHAT mode, press the ESCAPE key.
When in local mode, if you use the Y command, the system becomes a simple terminal emulator. This is normally in ATASCII translation. However, you can switch to ASCII, by using the A command before the Y command and hitting any key except RETURN at the hit <RETURN> prompt. There is a small amount of command stacking available. When changing conferences, you can use z-x;from-to or #;#;#;# where x is the conference number and from and to are numeric values or where # are valid message numbers. z-x;e will route you to enter message on board #x. With z-x;m you change boards and go to the main select prompt. When in the read message section, at the READ,TITLES,QUIT prompt you can use r;[list] or t;[list] where list is either a message range or list of message numbers. + and - for full forward or reverse work here as well. Also when reading messages, the reply, delete and main menu parameters at the end of a message can be queued so that d/r/m d/r d/m r/m r/d/d r/d all work. m must always be last. As of this moment, P cannot be used in a queue. It is preferable to have the d go before r so that an extra message is not rolled off the index queue. When uploading or downloading, in any place a d or u is requested by

a prompt, you can use the d or u followed by a delimiter and then the filename. ex. D;AMPLUS83

U;FOREMDOC

A level 25 response would be D:PAS.DAT

Yes, a user with level 25 can download your password file, so don't give it out. It is for sysop only.

Little things the system does:

There is a SYSUSR option on the message system.

If a message is addressed to sysusr:x where x is a password level from 0 to 24,

the message will be flagged as mail to any user with a password level greater than or equal to x. If the message is locked, only these users

will be able to read it.

There is no equivalent to the AMIS messages program. This system automatically

maintains the message files. There is only enough memory in FOREM to index approx 46 messages. This is a 46 element queue so that as the 47th message

is entered, the first one is lost. However, it is only eliminated from

the index file. This is also true of a message that is deleted. It is

only deleted from the index. AMIS has a program that allows you to edit out messages and compact the file. Although AMIS can store over 200 messages, they must be compacted manually.

FoReM is all automatic. At 4 am

(or if a caller is online at 4, immediately after he logs off), the system will automatically compact the message data files, only if a message has been deleted from the index.

In addition, in AMIS, if a message is attempted to be saved past the end

of the random access data file, AMIS will simply not save the message. FoReM will save the message in a file called MTEMP.DAT, delete the first 5 messages from the index, compact only the message data base in use, and then resave the message.

The paging system is automatically toggled off between midnight and 7 am. Contact me if you wish to eliminate this feature.

This system supports multiple drives without any code modification. It can

run up to 8 drives in any mix of 8", 5 1/4", single sided, double sided,

double density...etc...

System logic is as follows.

For downloads, the system will scan from drive 1 to drive 8 looking for the file.

For uploads, the system will start at the highest number drive it finds

online and scan backwards until it finds the first drive that can take the upload.

ALL SYSTEM DATA, TEXT AND MESSAGE FILES MUST BE ON DRIVE 1.

The reason it is done this way, is that the password file grows over time

and the message index files are dynamic. That is that their size varies

with how many messages are in the system. By uploading to the highest

drives, it lessens the risk that drive 1 will be filled generating an error when an attempt is made to save a message or password. In additon,

the system will not allow an upload that will leave less than 30 free 128 byte sectors (15 double density) for message and password file growth. It is most likely that the only reason you would ever get a full

disk error is that you did not allocate enough space for passwords using

INITBBS and the password file grew beyond the 30 sectors allowed. If this

should happen, you must delete download files from drive 1 to free up space, then run INITBBS to allocate more space. Remember, 1 sector is

equal to 2.5 passwords.

System requirments:

Minumum 40k ram. This system will not work with the RAMDISK by Axlon. ATARI 850

Any autoanswer modem. No Hayes Smartmodem commands are used.

However,

 a 1200 baud version is available for use with the Hayes 1200 Smart modem. This version will automatically detect baud rate at connect time.

Any 850 comptible printer.

1-8 drives of any ATARI compatible type.

A version will soon be available to take advatage of the Mosaic

 64k Ram select.

More random notes:

You cannot use SYSTEM RESET. The ml clock routine is stored in the cassette buffer. When reset is hit, the os cassette initialization routine

locks up the computer.

Purpose of the user line length parameter:

The system asks the user for his maximum line length. This does not add a cr/lf at end of that many character of output. Many users with 80 column displays do not like to be restricted to 40 column lines when entering messages. If a user selects a line length of 41 to 80 characters, he will be allowed to enter messages of 15 lines of that many characters. If he selects 40 or less, he can enter messages of 30 lines of that many characters. A message to sysop defaults to 15 lines of 80 characters.

This system has a full featured line oriented text editor patterned after the IBM CMS editor, but obviously only in command style. It allows

line gotos, string replacement, line insetions, up,down, block delete...

It is possible to restrict access to message bases by access level.

It is easiest in the BASIC version to restrict access as follows:

Either access is restricted to users with an access level \leq the conference number, or conferences above a certain number are restricted to users above a particular level. In either case, the boards not open to the user will not appear to them in mail check or in the list of boards to switch to.

This program fully supports the enhanced Xmodem of AMODEM PLUS and MOOSE MODEM terminal emulators. Up/downloads of more than 255 sectors

are permitted. But ONLY WITH THOSE 2 PROGRAMS. Uploads are not allowed without using Xmodem.

Coming soon to the the ACTION! version:

Any conference can be restricted to any an particular access level

Example board 19 may be restricted, but 20 may be open to all.

Each function may be restricted to any level unlike the current version.

(Now only level 0 may be restricted).

Cursor control conversion for IBM PC compatible machines.

support for new MYDOS subdirectories.

String search for message editor.

Machine language code.

Restrictions to sysusr-either by access level or by privelege in
user password record

Review:

To first set up the system:

Format a disk to use as your working data disk.

Boot with BASIC the FoReM program disk.

Select initialize bbs.

Set up for however many confereces you want.

If using a single density disk, either do not have more
than 3 boards or give them more than 150 sectors each.

A maximum length message, 15 lines of 80 characters
can use about 12 sectors for storage. Most messages are
nowhere near that long, so 46 can usually fit into that
small a space. You should never use less than 100, as
when the system fills up, it will constantly be compacting
when saving messages, which is a slow process.

Set up password file. remember each password takes 50 bytes which
is 2.5 per sector. you should allow for at least 200 users.

My system has about 400 valid passwords.

Exit to main menu.

Go to DOS.

Move all DAT and TXT files to your working disk with DOS option C.

Reboot with BASIC.

Run FoReM.

Enter date and time.

When clock appears, press SELECT.

Enter none for a password.

Apply for system password.

At main menu, hit BREAK.

Type GOTO 90.

Enter 25 and hit RETURN.

Type p and RETURN to verify.

Logoff requesting that the password be saved. (you will be prompted
to always use y and n and not yes and no).

You can now log back on with sysop level.

To validate your users passwords, either hit OPTION and SELECT while
they are online and the system is waiting for input, or run
validate.

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